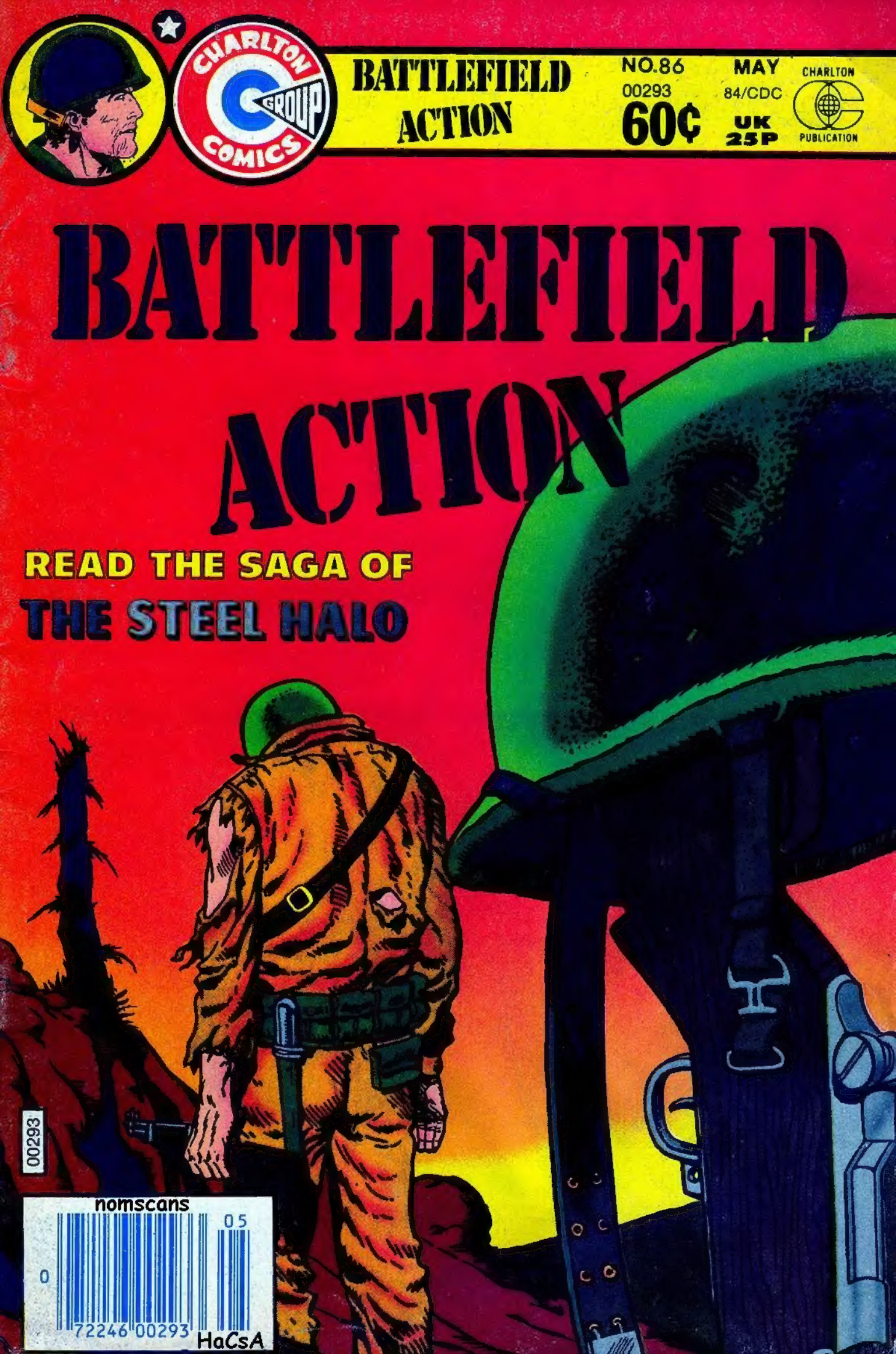
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THE HUNTER
THE CCF SNIPER LAY PATIENTLY ON THE KOREAN HILLSIDE HIS SNIPERSCOPE FOCUSED ON THE COMPANY COMMAND POSITION IN THE VALLEY BELOW! SERGEANT MOE SCHWARTZ WAS CENTERED IN THE CROSSHAIRS... THE CHICOM'S FINGER TIGHTENED ON THE TRIGGER AND SCHWARTZ ALMOST DIED! BUT YING LI DECIDED TO WAIT FOR A MORE IMPORTANT TARGET... A TARGET LIKE...
SOMEONE SAID "GET DOWN, MAJOR!" AND THE MAJOR WAS ABOUT TO MAKE A FUNNY REPLY... WHEN THE COMMIES BULLET HIT HIM DEAD CENTER!
LAY DOWN COVERING FIRE! GET THE MAJOR OVER TO THE MEDIC!

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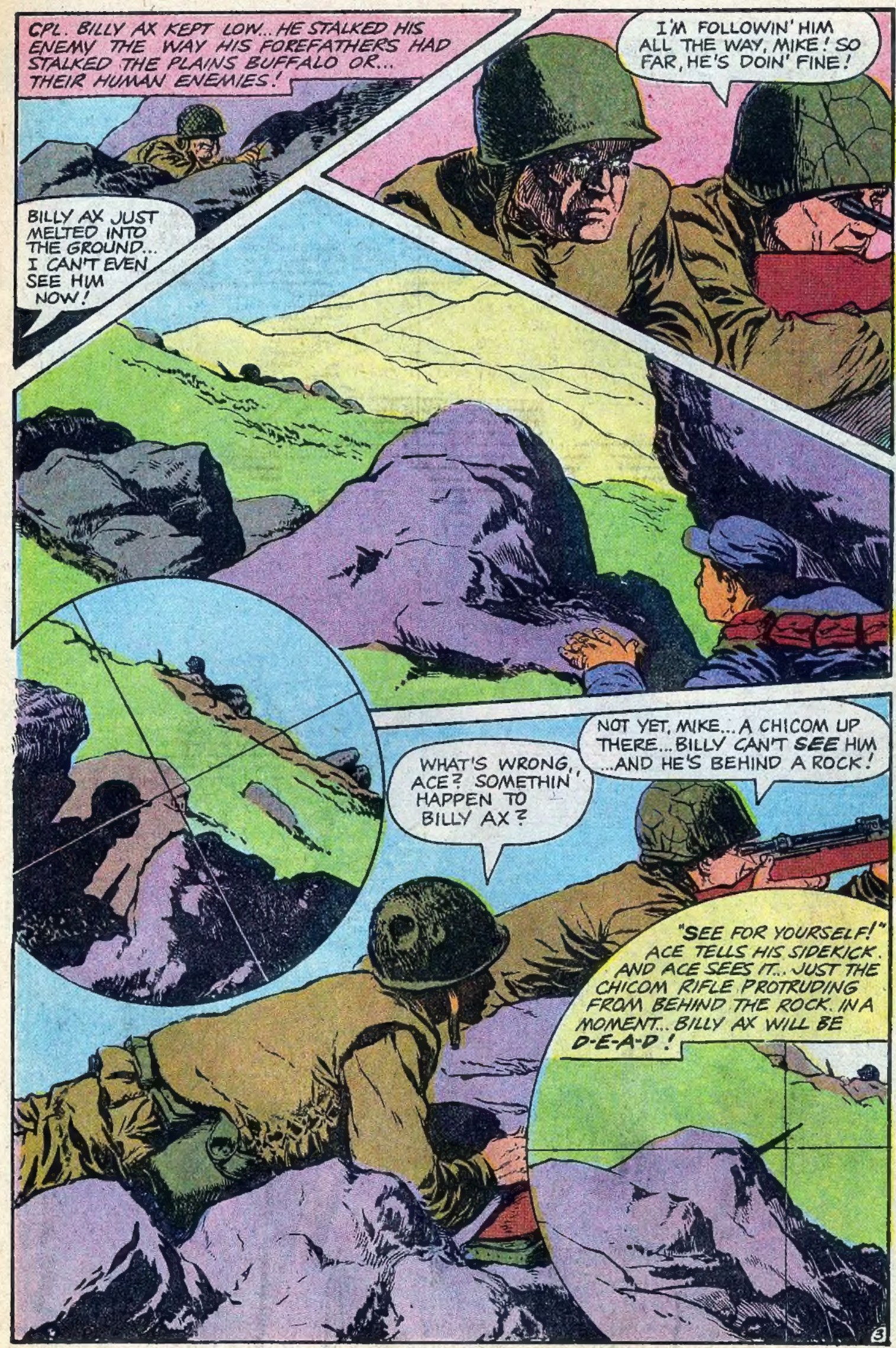
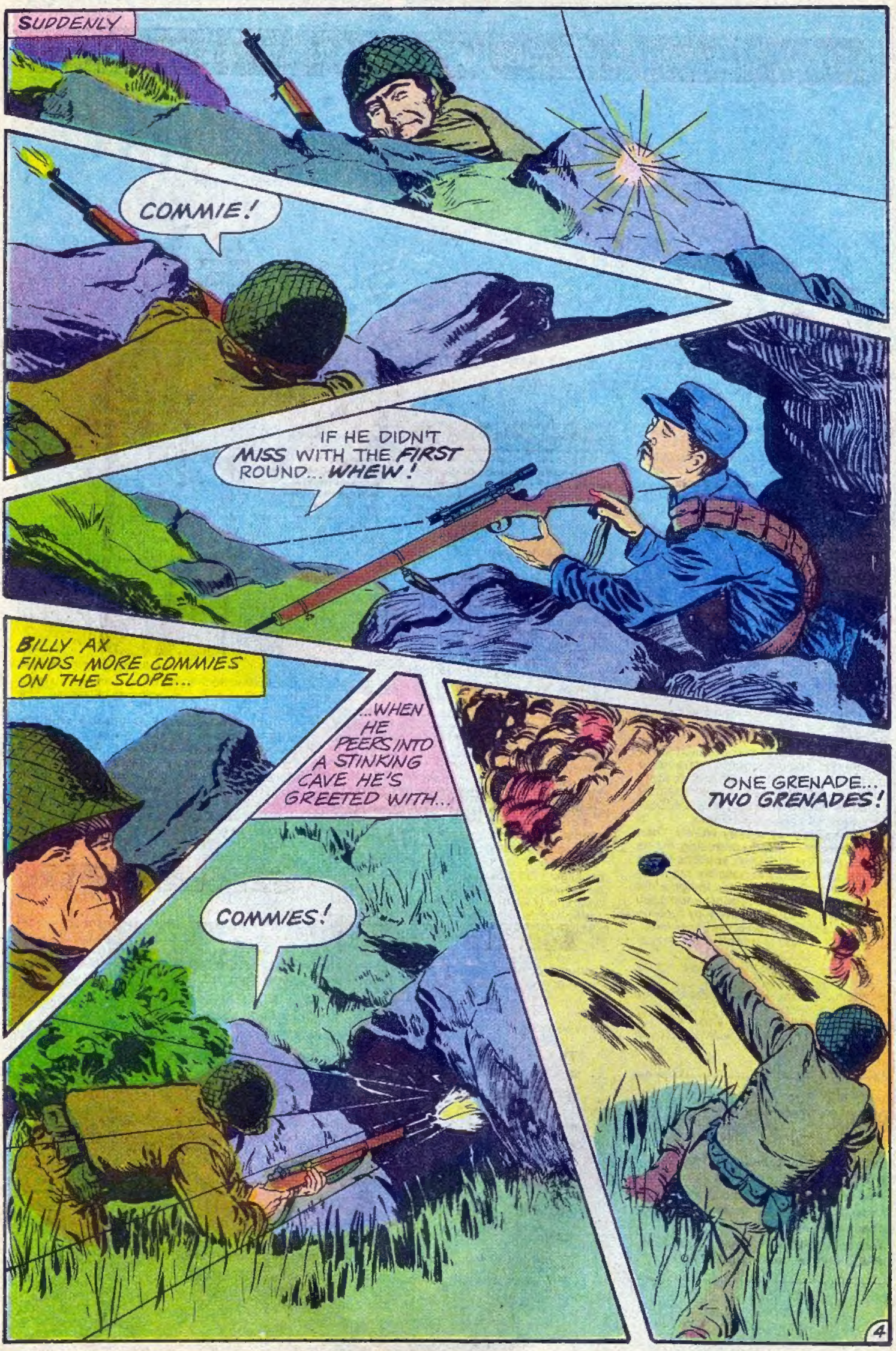
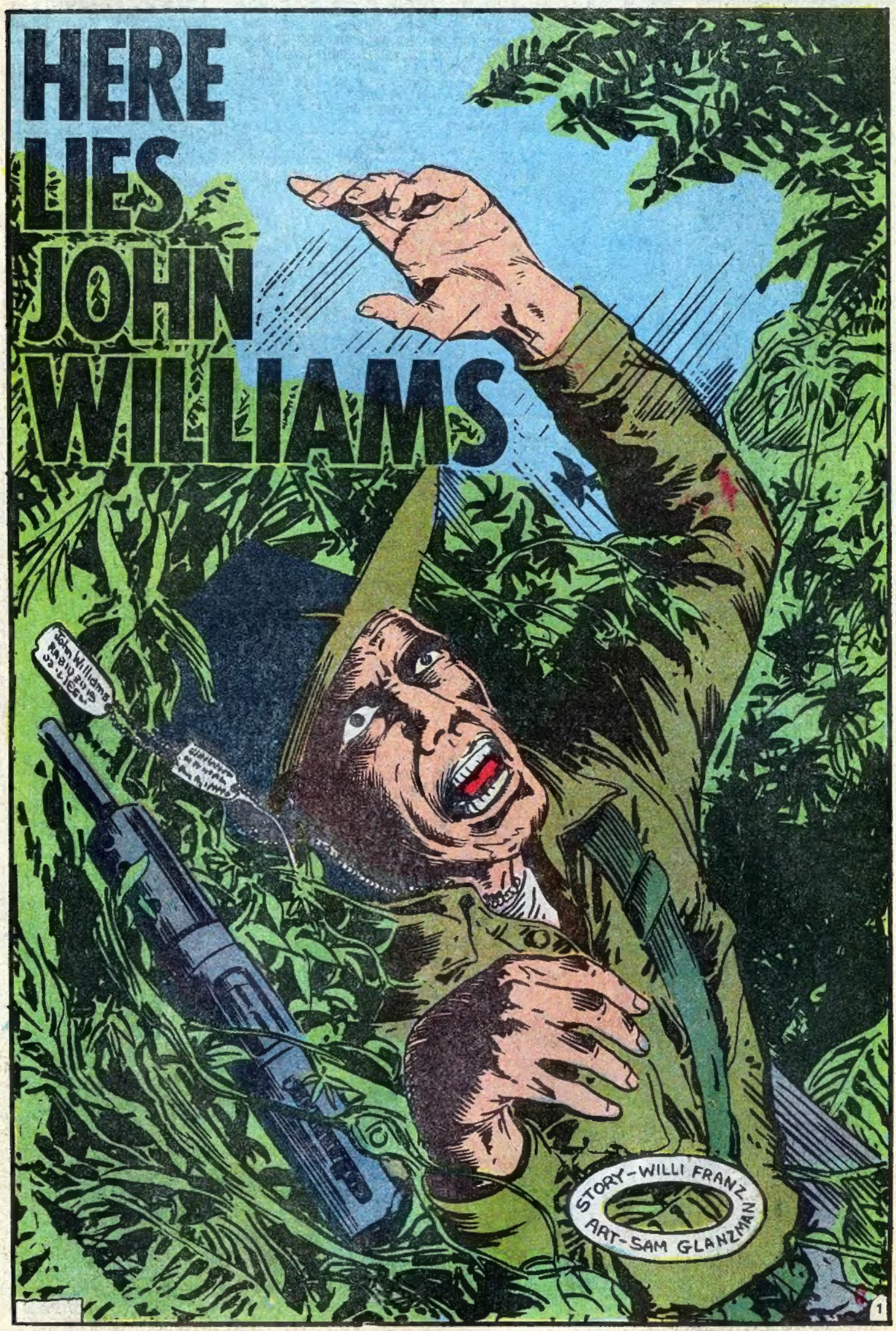
LT. VINCE CARLIN HAD HIS BINOCULARS ON THE SLOPE... HE SAW THE NAVAJO'S BULLETS RIP NEAR THE COMMIE... AND THEN HE SAW THE SNIPER FLINCH AND WRITHE IN SUDDEN PAIN!
YOU NAILED HIM CORPORAL AX! RIGHT IN THE HEAD!
KEEP WEARING THAT NYLON BODY ARMOR, CORPORAL... I GOT SOME BROKEN RIBS BUT I'D BE DEAD IF I HADN'T HAD IT ON!
MAJOR, I WANT TO MAKE SURE THE SLOPE-HEAD IS DEAD!
IF THE COMMIES DEAD... I GOT NOTHIN' TO WORRY ABOUT... IF NOT...
WHEN THE SQUAD WAS RELIEVED FOR CHOW, HE GNAWED ON SOME CRACKERS AND CHEESE, THEN WENT TO THE SKIPPER...
SO YOU WANT TO SCOUT THE HILLSIDE? OKAY, CORPORAL... WE'LL TRY TO KEEP FROM SHOOTING YOU BY MISTAKE!
THANKS, SKIPPER!
2


CPL. BILLY AX KEPT LOW.. HE STALKED HIS ENEMY THE WAY HIS FOREFATHERS HAD STALKED THE PLAINS BUFFALO OR... THEIR HUMAN ENEMIES!
I'M FOLLOWIN' HIM ALL THE WAY, MIKE! SO FAR, HE'S DOIN' FINE!
BILLY AX JUST MELTED INTO THE GROUND... I CAN'T EVEN SEE HIM NOW!
WHAT'S WRONG, ACE? SOMETHIN' HAPPEN TO BILLY AX?
NOT YET, MIKE... A CHICOM UP THERE... BILLY CAN'T SEE HIM ...AND HE'S BEHIND A ROCK!
"SEE FOR YOURSELF!" ACE TELLS HIS SIDEKICK. AND ACE SEES IT... JUST THE CHICOM RIFLE PROTRUDING FROM BEHIND THE ROCK. IN A MOMENT... BILLY AX WILL BE D-E-A-D!


SUDDENLY
COMMIE!
IF HE DIDN'T MISS WITH THE FIRST ROUND... WHEW!
BILLY AX FINDS MORE COMMIES ON THE SLOPE...
...WHEN HE PEERS INTO A STINKING CAVE HE'S GREETED WITH...
COMMIES!
ONE GRENADE... TWO GRENADES!
4

THE FIRST GRENADE ERUPTED LIKE GRENADES ALWAYS DID... BUT THE SECOND ONE...
THEY'RE MAKIN' BIGGER AN' BETTER GRENADES THESE DAYS!
THERE'S THE GOOK WHO SHOT THE MAJOR! I'D BETTER TAKE A LOOK ...HE MIGHT HAVE AN IMPROVED SNIPER RIFLE!
BILLY AX HAD A RIFLEMAN'S INTEREST IN HIS ENEMY'S WEAPON... HE GRABBED IT, GRUNTED WHEN HE SAW THE RUSSIAN MARKINGS, AND PEERED THROUGH THE TELESCOPE...
LOUSY 'SCOPE... LET'S SEE IF I CAN SEE THE COMMAND POST FROM HERE!
5

HIS ENEMY RAISED UP... THE WOUND ON HIS FOREHEAD WAS JUST A GASH FROM A FLYING ROCK FRAGMENT! NOW, HE WAS POISED TO STRIKE THE DEATH BLOW...
ACE IS MOTIONIN' AT ME... WHAT'S HE MEAN BY THAT?
I GET IT! HE'S TELLIN' ME...
...ABOUT YOU!
BILLY AX WAS SCARED AND HE HIT HARD! HE CHOPPED HIS ENEMY'S WRIST TO DISARM HIM, RAMMED HIS RIGID FINGERS INTO HIS LARYNX AND THEN SMASHED HIS HAND AT A VITAL SPOT!
WHEN I SAW YOU GIVIN' ME THE SIGN FOR ENEMY BEHIND ME, I THOUGHT YOU WERE PUTTIN' ME ON... BUT HE HAD DRIED FISH IN HIS POCKET AND I SMELLED IT SO I MOVED IN TIME!
END


HERE LIES JOHN WILLIAMS
John Williams RABID ZOID 33 LIES!
STORY-WILLI FRANZ
ART-SAM GLANZMAN
1

WHILE IN THE HOSPITAL AT BRISBAIN I RAN INTO AND OLD AND DEAR FRIEND OF MINE, JOHN WILLIAMS...SO WITH A BIT OF FENAGLING AND CONNIVING I MANAGED TO HAVE HIM ATTACHED TO MY UNIT. I KNEW HIM TO BE A FIRST RATE FIGHTER AND THE HAPPIEST JOE YOU COULD MEET. BUT A CHANGE HAD COME OVER JOHNNIE, I FIRST NOTICED IT WHEN WE WERE BACK IN THE LINE ...AT A BRIEFING, IN THE STEAMING JUNGLES OF NEW GUINEA.

YOUR MISSION IS TO INVESTIGATE THIS VILLAGE. THERE WAS AN AMERICAN DOCTOR THERE WHO HELPED THE VILLAGERS GREATLY UNTIL THE JAPS TOOK OVER. HE THEN BECAME AN OBSERVER FOR US. HE ACCUMULATED VITAL INFORMATION ON JAP UNITS, TROOP DISPOSITION AND STRENGTH, SUPPLY DEPOTS, ETC...BUT THE POOR BLOKE DIDN'T HAVE A VERY GOOD MEMORY, OR HE COULDN'T TRANSMIT TOO FREQUENTLY, SO HE MADE NOTES AND PUT THEM ON FILE, HIDING THEM EITHER IN THE VILLAGE OR IN THE JUNGLE NEARBY.

SWAMP

I SAID "POOR" BLOKE BECAUSE THE JAPS CAUGHT HIM A FEW DAYS AGO, AND OUR AMERICAN FRIEND DIED UNDER TYPICAL JAPANESE INTERROGATION. HAVING FOUND NOTHING, THE JAPS LEFT THE VILLAGE QUIETLY. THE NEXT DAY, HOWEVER, THEY SOMEHOW FOUND OUT ABOUT THE FILES THAT WERE KEPT, BUT NOT THEIR LOCATION.

FURIOUS, THE JAPS RETURNED AND MASSACRED THE VILLAGERS BECAUSE THEY WOULDN'T REVEAL WHERE THE FILES WERE HIDDEN. WE WERE TOLD THIS BY THE ONLY VILLAGER TO SURVIVE THE SLAUGHTER, SOME UNFORTUNATE WHO WAS CARVED UP AND LEFT FOR DEAD BY SOME JAP SERGEANT. HE BARELY MANAGED TO MAKE IT TO OUR ENCAMPMENT. HE DIED JUST A FEW MINUTES AGO. WE SUSPECT THAT THERE ARE STILL JAPS IN THE VILLAGE, FRUSTRATED AND STILL SEARCHING FOR THOSE FILES.

THE JAPS WANT THOSE FILES FOUND AND DESTROYED. WE NEED THEM...INTACT. AND WE NEED THEM DESPERATELY. I IMAGINE YOU MUST ALREADY KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN CALLED UPON TO DO. ARE THERE ANY QUESTIONS, GENTLEMEN?

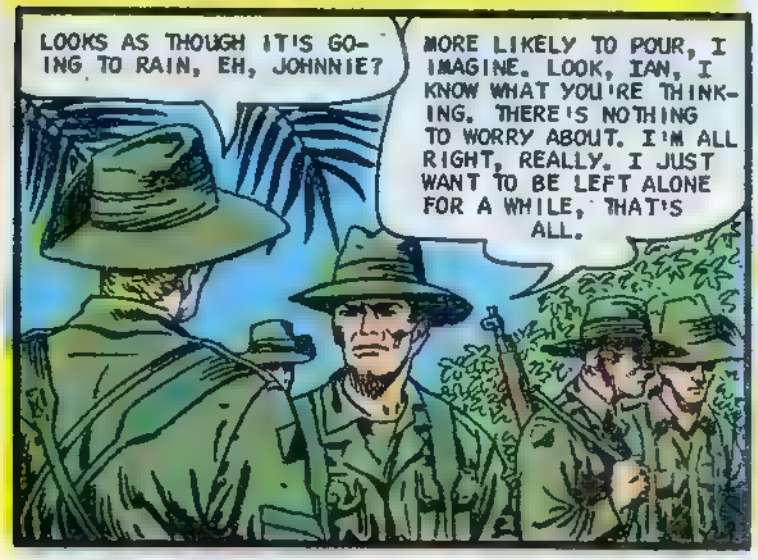
HESITANTLY, AS THOUGH TO SPEAK WOULD MEAN SEVERE CONSEQUENCE, JOHNNIE STEPPED FORWARD.

YES, SIR. SIR? IS THE TOWN CEMETERY VERY CLOSE TO THE PATH WE HAVE TO TAKE?

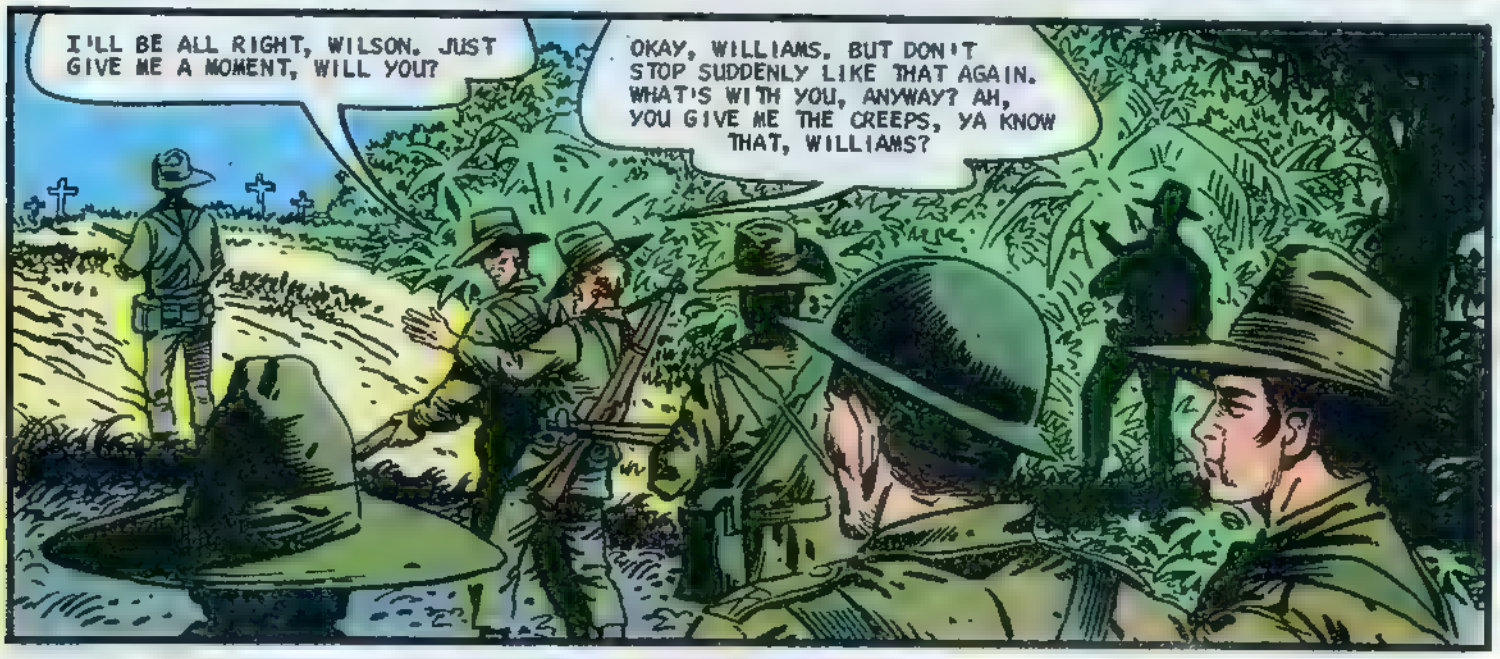
YES. IT'S RIGHT ALONGSIDE OF THE PATH. YOU'LL PASS RIGHT BY IT. WHY?

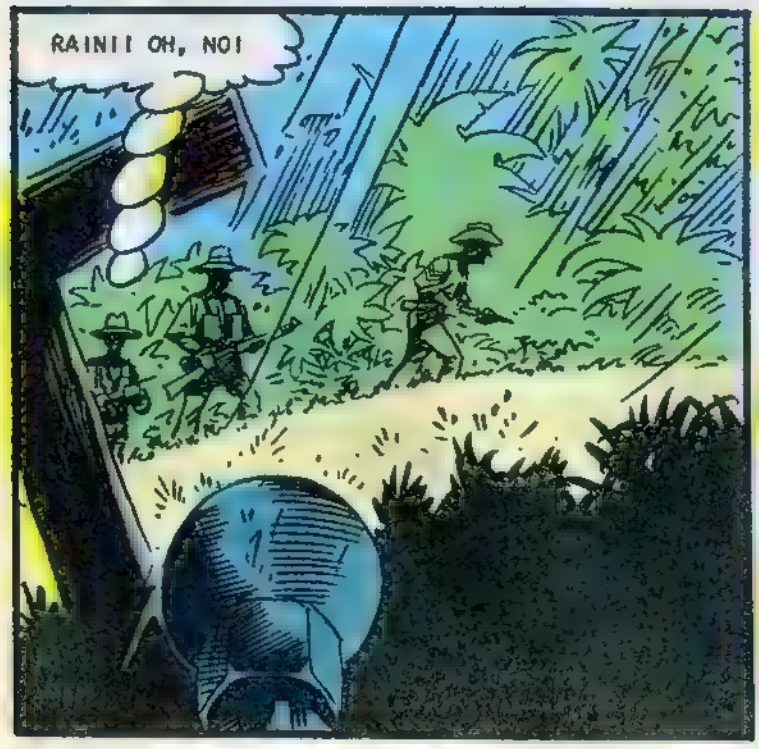
OH, NOTHING...NOTHING, SIR.
VERY WELL, THEN. DRAW AMMO AND GRENADES. GOOD LUCK, MEN. YOU'LL PROBABLY NEED IT.
AS WE LEFT THE CAPTAIN'S TENT...
JOHNNIE...WHAT'S WRONG? YOU...IT'S ONLY THE COOK'S CAT. WHAT'S WITH YOU?
JOHNNIE ANSWERED, AS THOUGH IN SOME KIND OF TRANCE.
IT'S STARTING AGAIN!
YOU SURE YOU'RE OKAY?
I'LL BE OKAY. I'M ALL RIGHT. DON'T WORRY 'BOUT ME.
I'M ALL RIGHT, BLAST YOU, IAN! DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME?! I'M ALL RIGHT!
SCARED TO DEATH OF A RUDDY BLACK CAT! RUDDY SUPERSTITIOUS POPPYCOCK. RIDICULOUS.
I SAID NOTHING MORE OF THE BLACK CAT, BUT AS WE LEFT...
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE SUPERSTITIOUS, WILSON.
I'M NOT...BUT WITH THAT WILLIAMS HERE, I DON'T LIKE TAKING ANY CHANCES. GIT OUTTA HERE, YA FLAMIN' BLACK DEVIL!

A SHORT TIME LATER, I DROPPED BACK IN THE LINE TO SEE HOW JOHNNIE WAS DOING. HE WAS EXTREMELY UNEASY, GLANCING NERVOUSLY INTO THE SURROUNDING JUNGLE AS THOUGH SEARCHING FOR SOMETHING, AND YET HOPING NEVER TO FIND IT.


LOOKS AS THOUGH IT'S GOING TO RAIN, EH, JOHNNIE?
MORE LIKELY TO POUR, I IMAGINE. LOOK, IAN, I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING. THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT. I'M ALL RIGHT, REALLY. I JUST WANT TO BE LEFT ALONE FOR A WHILE, THAT'S ALL.

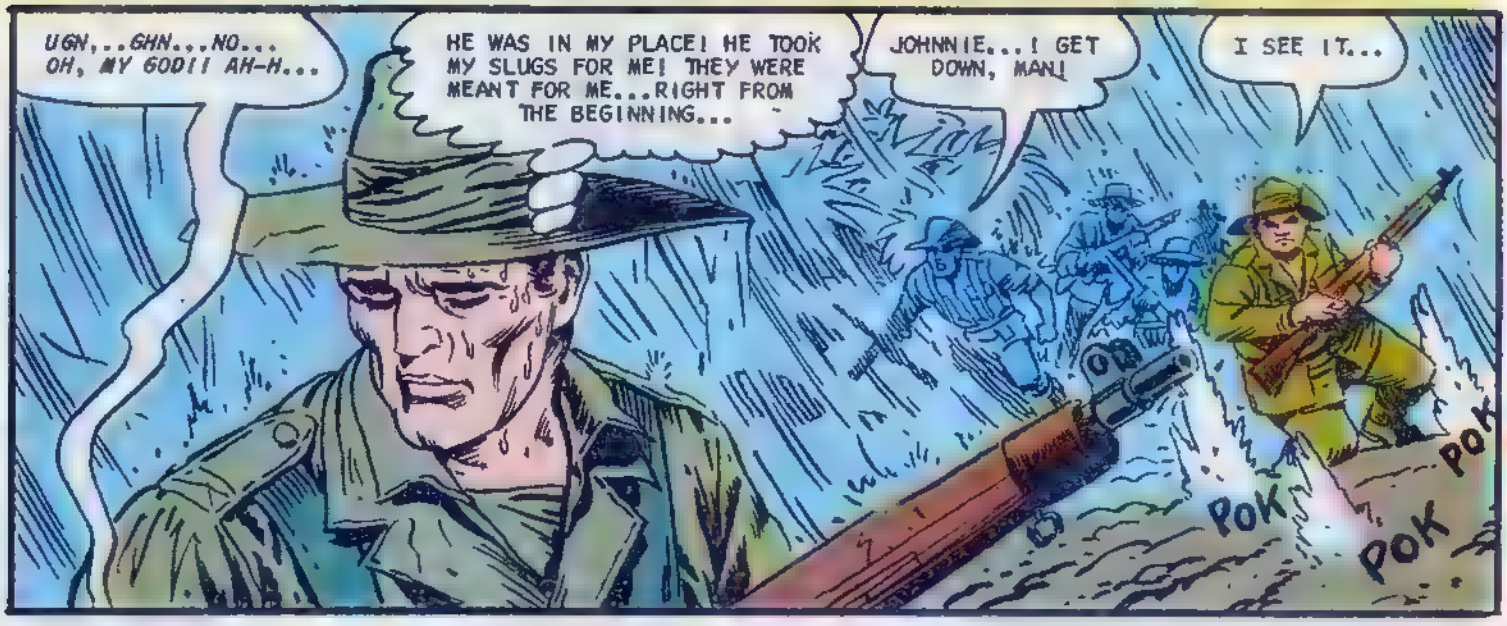
A FEW MINUTES LATER, WE SPOTTED THE CRUDE, WOODEN CROSSES IN THE TALL GRASS, MARKING THE CEMETERY. AS WE CONTINUED OUR CLIMB UP THE SLOPING PATH...

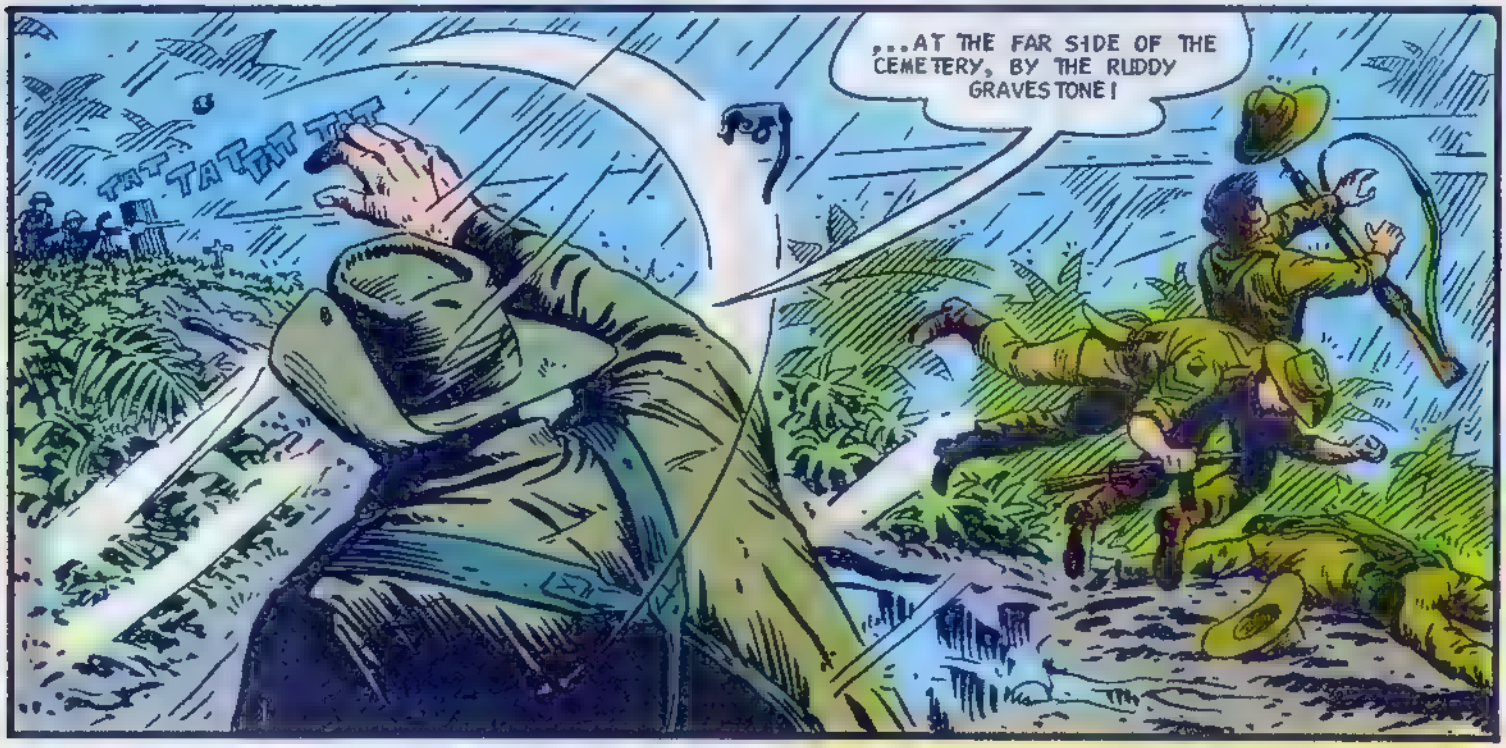

I'LL BE ALL RIGHT, WILSON. JUST GIVE ME A MOMENT, WILL YOU?
OKAY, WILLIAMS. BUT DON'T STOP SUDDENLY LIKE THAT AGAIN. WHAT'S WITH YOU, ANYWAY? AH, YOU GIVE ME THE CREEPS, YA KNOW THAT, WILLIAMS?

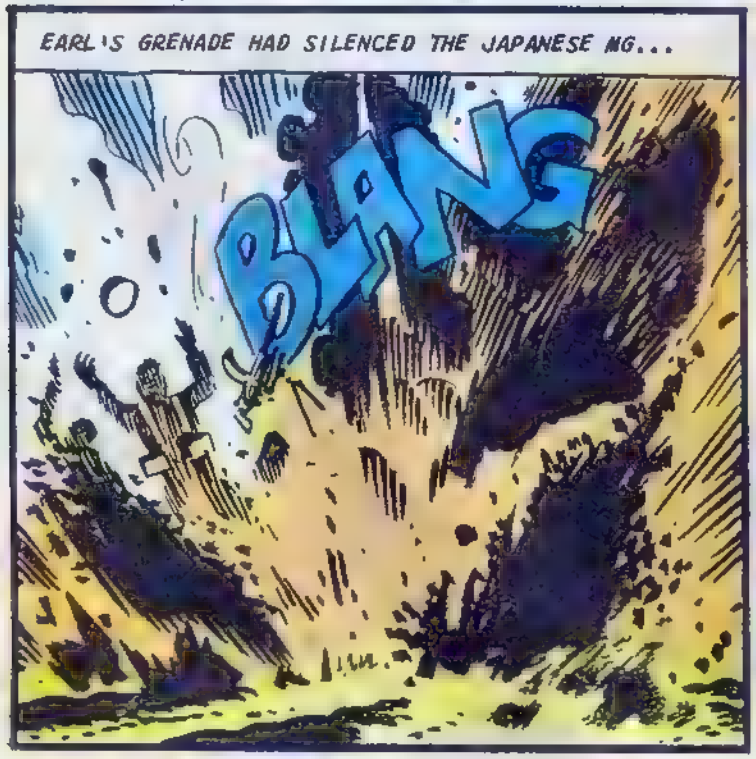


ABOVE THE HIDEOUSLY LOUD STUTTERING OF THE JAPANESE MG COULD BE HEARD THE PIERCING CRIES OF PAIN AND DESPAIR THAT ESCAPED WILSON'S THROAT AS THE HOT SLUGS TORE INTO HIS BODY, WHICH NOW JERKED AND TWITCHED UNDER THEIR IMPACT.

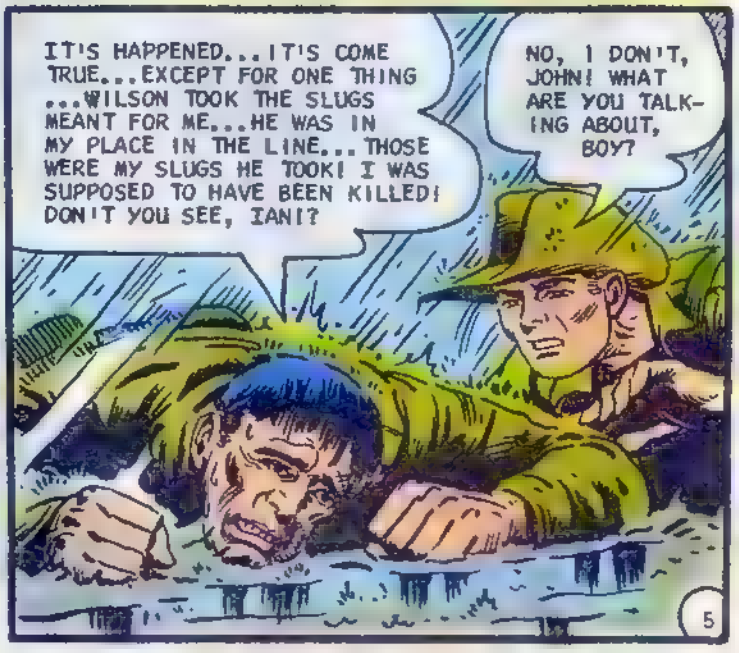
AS THOUGH UNAWARE OF THE BULLETS CUTTING THROUGH THE AIR AROUND HIM, JOHNNIE JUST STOOD THERE ON THE PATH, LOOKING DOWN HELPLESSLY ON THE GROTESQUE FORM OF THE MORTALLY WOUNDED WILSON.


UGN,..GHN...NO... OH, MY GOD!! AH-H...
HE WAS IN MY PLACE! HE TOOK MY SLUGS FOR ME! THEY WERE MEANT FOR ME...RIGHT FROM THE BEGINNING...
JOHNNIE...! GET DOWN, MAN!
I SEE IT...
POK
POK
POK





...BUT IT WAS ANOTHER THING TO SILENCE POOR WILSON'S AGONIZED CRIES...AND JOHNNIE'S SENSELESS BABBLING.


IT'S HAPPENED...IT'S COME TRUE...EXCEPT FOR ONE THING ...WILSON TOOK THE SLUGS MEANT FOR ME...HE WAS IN MY PLACE IN THE LINE... THOSE WERE MY SLUGS HE TOOK! I WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN KILLED! DON'T YOU SEE, IAN!?
NO, I DON'T, JOHN! WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, BOY?

IN BRISBAIN...BEFORE I MET YOU, I WAS WALKING BACK TO THE MILITARY HOSPITAL LATE ONE NIGHT. IT WAS POURIN' RAIN AND THERE WAS NO SHELTER, SO I TOOK A SHORT CUT ALONG THE CEMETERY...I ALMOST TRIPPED AND BROKE MY NECK OVER A LOUSY BLACK CAT THAT DARTED IN FRONT OF ME...

"I HAD JUST STOPPED UNDER THIS TALL, WILLOWY TREE TO GET OUT OF THE RAIN AND TO CATCH MY BREATH WHEN IT CAUGHT MY EYE. IT WAS RIGHT BY THE CEMETERY FENCE...!

JOHN WILLIAM
1919-194

"I RAN! I RAN AS FAST AS I COULD AND DIDN'T STOP 'TILL I REACHED THE HOSPITAL. I DREAM ABOUT THAT ALMOST EVERY NIGHT, NOW...I CAN'T STOP IT!"

IT SEEMS THAT I'M ALWAYS SEEING THAT GRAVESTONE...

...OR IMAGINE YOU SEE IT, JOHNNIE?

ONE THING'S FOR RUDDY SURE...YOU'LL NEVER SEE WHAT WAS ON THAT RUDDY TOMBSTONE. LOOK AT IT.

AT THAT MOMENT, WILSON BECAME QUIET.

WILSON'S JUST DIED, IAN.

YOU SEE, IAN. HE JUST TOOK MY PLACE. I SHOULD BE...

SHUT UP WITH THAT GARBAGE, JOHNNIE, WILL YOU!? YOUR LOUSY PREDICTION CAME TRUE, ONLY YOU'RE ALIVE AND HE'S DEAD, SO JUST LEAVE IT AT THAT!

WE WRAPPED WILSON'S BODY IN HIS PONCHO AND LEFT HIM AT THE SIDE OF THE PATH SO WE COULD RECOVER IT ON THE WAY BACK. A SHORT TIME LATER, THE TEN OF US, SOAKED CLEAR THROUGH TO THE BONE, WERE HUDDLED IN THE MUD AND POURING RAIN JUST OUTSIDE OF THE SMALL, DESERTED VILLAGE.

EARL, JOHNNIE, JERRY, TOM, AND ME WILL GO RIGHT DOWN THE MIDDLE, CHECKING EACH HUT AS WE GO ALONG ...HARRY, YOU AND THE REST OF THE SQUAD COVER US IN CASE THERE ARE ANY NIPS IN THERE. ALL RIGHT, WE GO.

AS WE SLOWLY ADVANCED DOWN THE MUDDY AND RAIN-SOAKED STREET, IT SEEMED AS THOUGH JOHNNIE HAD BEEN RELIEVED OF SOME GREAT PRESSURE. THERE WAS STILL FEAR IN HIS EYES, BUT IT WAS THE FEAR SHARED BY US ALL IN COMBAT.

SUDDENLY...

TAKA TAKA TAKA

ZIP

ZIP

ZIP

MY RIGHT LEG COLLAPSED UNDER ME AND I FELL ON MY KNEES IN THE MUD. I WAS OUT IN THE OPEN AND JAPANESE LEAD WAS KICKING UP THE SLOP ALL AROUND ME SO I ROLLED ACROSS THE STREET TO AN OVERTURNED OX-CART WHERE EARL AND JOHNNIE HAD TAKEN COVER. I NOTICED THAT POOR TOM HAD DIED WITHOUT UTTERING A SOUND.

POW

TAKA

TAKA TA

JOHNNIE...I-I'M WOUNDED! TAKE MY STEN AND WORK YOUR WAY AROUND BEHIND THE HOUSE, BUT DON'T LET LOOSE UNTIL YOU'RE RIGHT ON TOP O' THEM. AND NO GRENADES! IF THE FILES ARE IN THERE, I WANT THEM IN ONE PIECE...NOT IN PIECES.

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME, IAN.

POK

I KNOW I CAN, JOHNNIE.
POW
THE NIPS WERE FIRING AT US WITHOUT LET-UP, AND THERE WAS NO SIGN OF HARRY AND THE REST OF THE SQUAD. THEN...
THERE'S JOHNNIE!
JOHNNIE DISAPPEARED BEHIND THE HOUSE. A MOMENT PASSED, BUT THE JAP MACHINE GUN WAS STILL FIRING, THE SLUGS EATING AWAY PIECES OF THE OX-CART. JERRY WAS HIT!
WHERE'S THAT RUDDY FRIEND O' YOURS, IAN?!
I DON'T KNOW! HE SHOULD'VE OPENED UP BY NOW!
POK
POK
POK
JERRY WAS HIT IN THE SHOULDER AND WAS MOANING SOFTLY, ALMOST TO HIMSELF. PINNED DOWN BY THE MURDEROUS MACHINE GUN FIRE, WE WERE RUNNING LOW ON AMMO. FINALLY...
IT'S RUDDY WELL ABOUT TIME, I SHOULD THINK!
YEAH, BUT THAT'S NOT MY STEN! LISTEN!
BRATTA
HARRY SIMMS AND HIS MEN CAME OUT OF THE DENSE JUNGLE AND SILENCED THE MACHINE GUN. AS EARL HELPED ME UP...
WHERE'S JOHNNIE!? WHAT'S HAPPENED TO HIM?
LET'S FIND OUT. 'EY, SMITH! TAKE CARE O' JERRY OVER 'ERE, WILL YA?
8

EARL AND I RAN AS FAST AS WE COULD UNDER THE CIR-CUMSTANCES.

THEN, WE BOTH SAW A SIGHT THAT MADE OUR BLOOD RUN COLD. JOHNNIE LAY SPRAWLED IN THE MUD BEHIND THE HOUSE, MOTIONLESS. IN FRONT OF HIM STOOD...

JOHN WILLIAMS 1919-1943

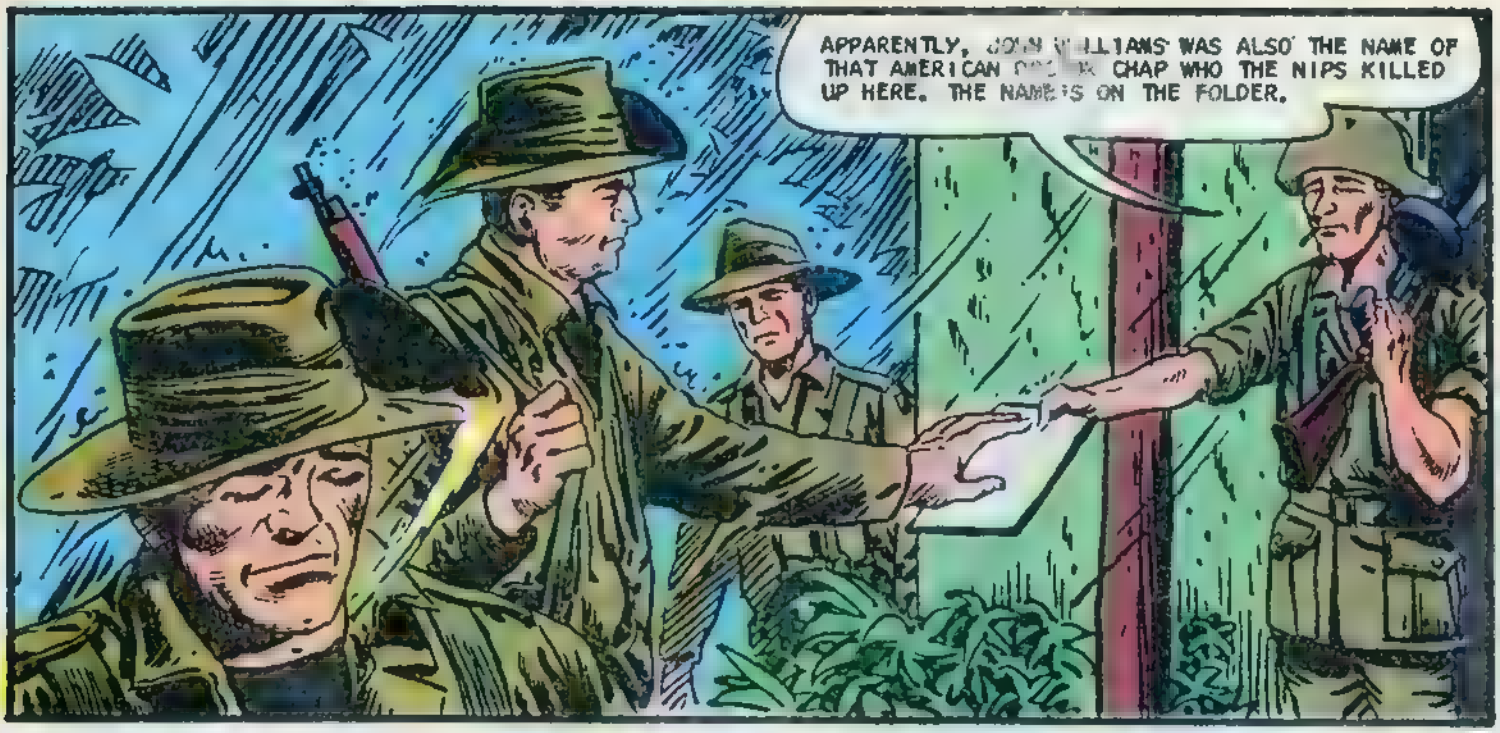
JOHN...? JOHNNIE...? HE ...HE'S DEAD, EARL. THERE'S NOT A MARK ON HIM! HIS HEART JUST STOPPED BEATING. HE COULDN'T TAKE IT. HE JUST DIED.

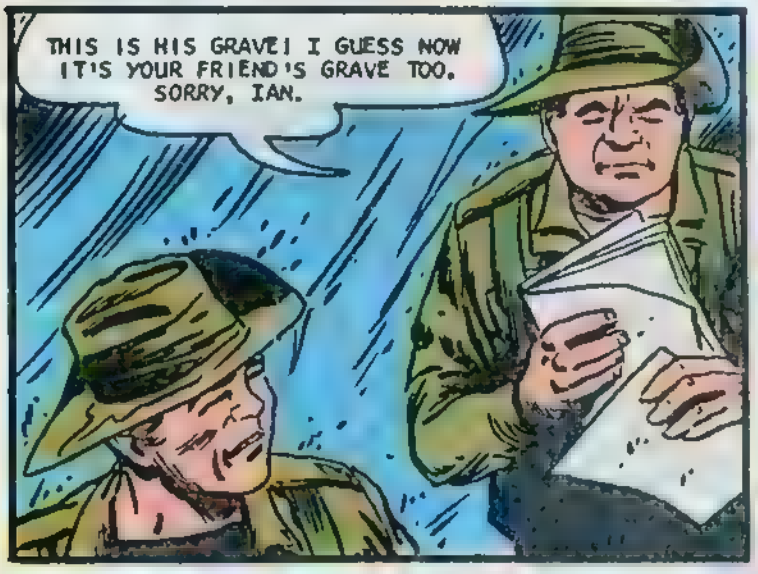
GOD! GOD!

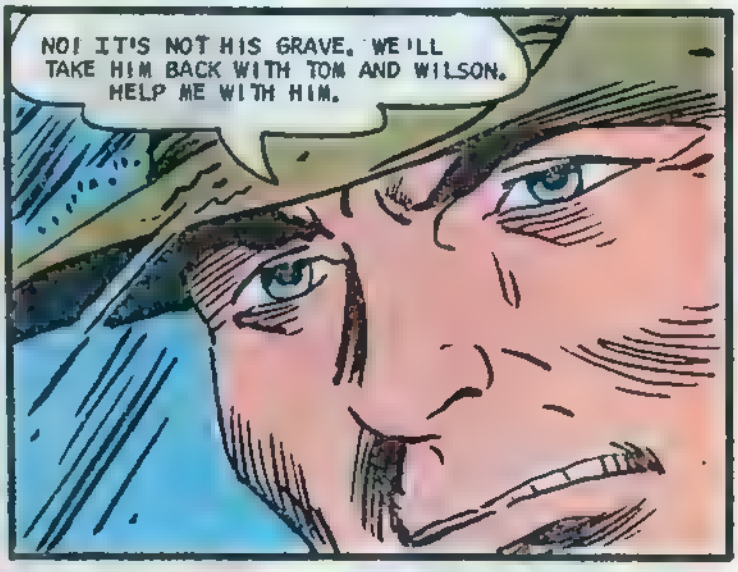
JOHN WILLIAMS 1919-1943

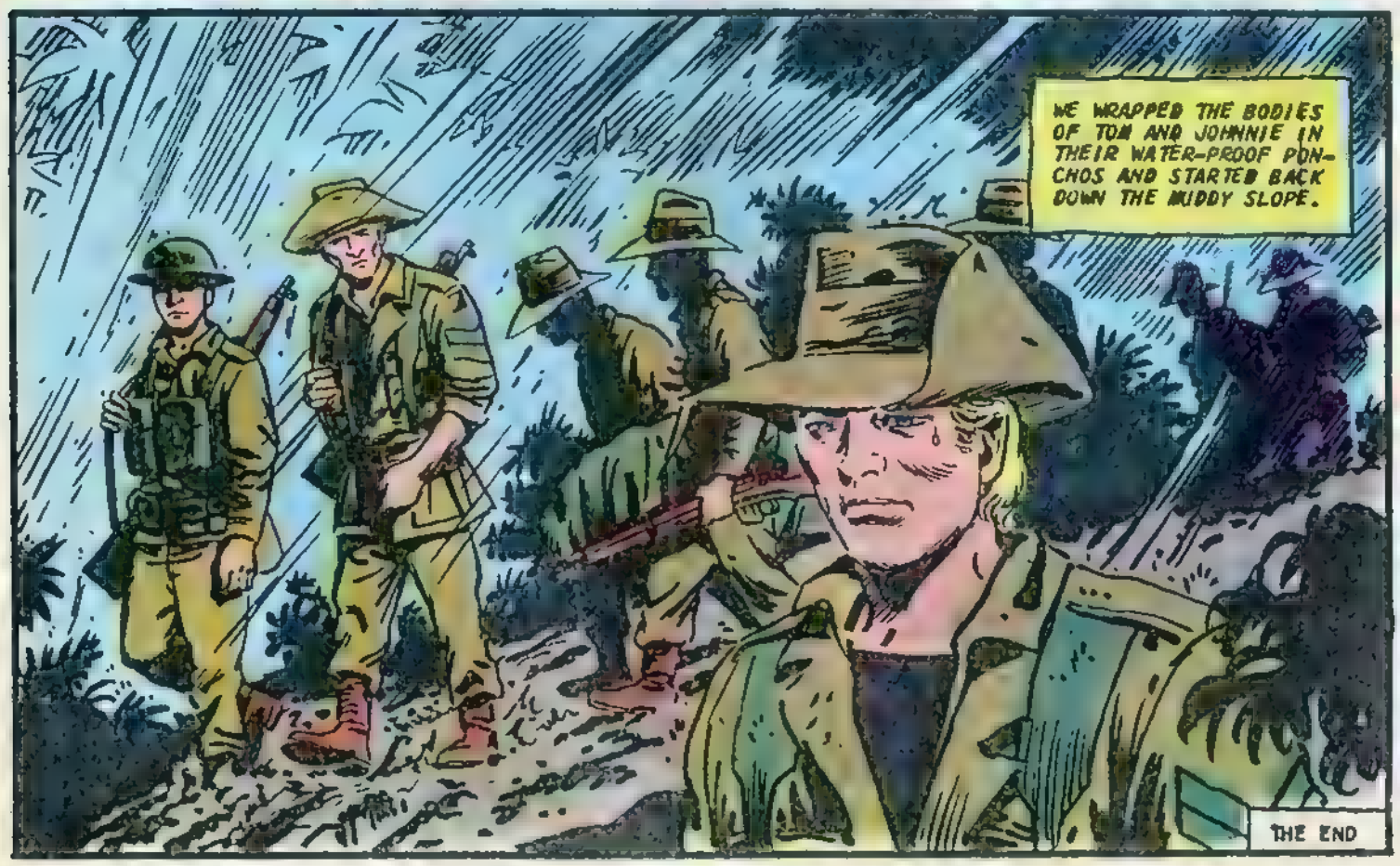
THIS WAS NO TRICK OF JOHNNIE'S IMAGINATION...THIS WAS REAL...HORRIBLY REAL. HARRY SIMMS CAME OUT OF THE HOUSE, THE DESPERATELY NEEDED FILES IN HIS COARSE AND MUDDY HANDS.

THAT'S JOHN WILLIAMS' GRAVE, ALL RIGHT. THE VILLAGERS MUST'VE BURIED HIM BEFORE THE NIPS RETURNED.


APPARENTLY, JOHN WILLIAMS WAS ALSO THE NAME OF THAT AMERICAN CHAP WHO THE NIPS KILLED UP HERE. THE NAME'S ON THE FOLDER.

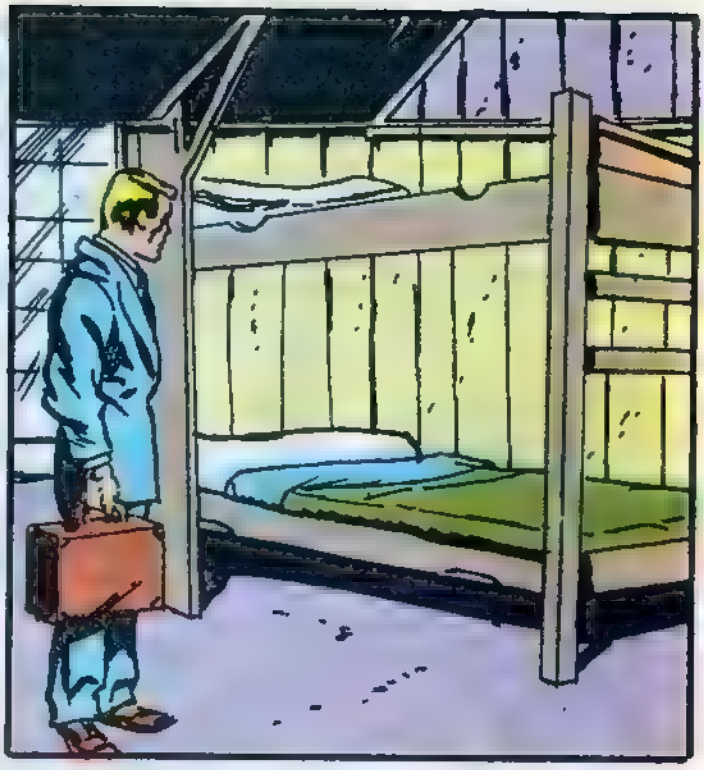

THIS IS HIS GRAVE! I GUESS NOW IT'S YOUR FRIEND'S GRAVE TOO. SORRY, IAN.

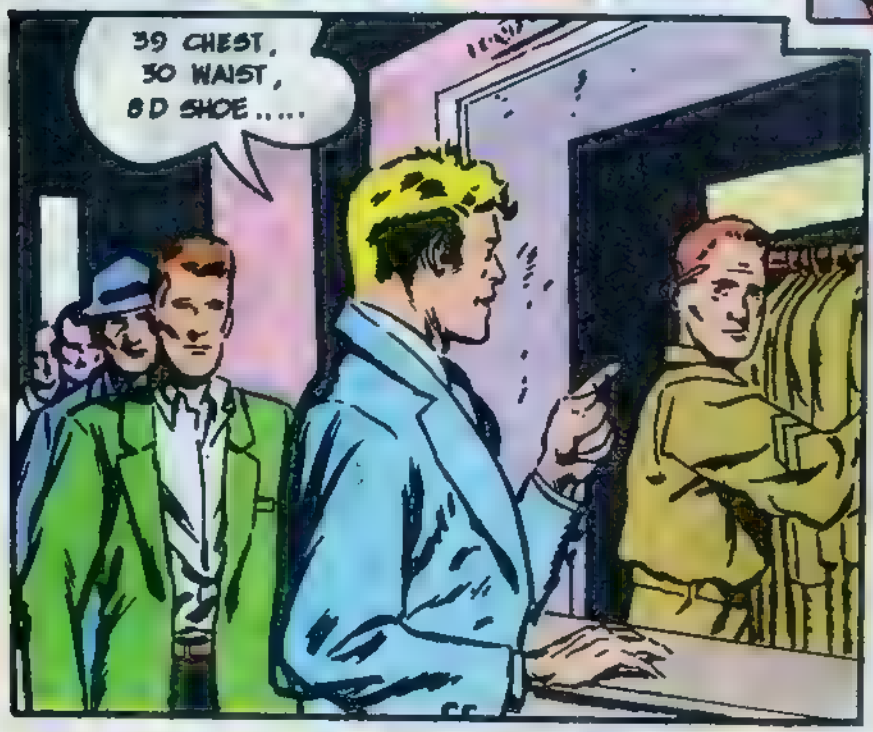

NO! IT'S NOT HIS GRAVE. WE'LL TAKE HIM BACK WITH TOM AND WILSON. HELP ME WITH HIM.

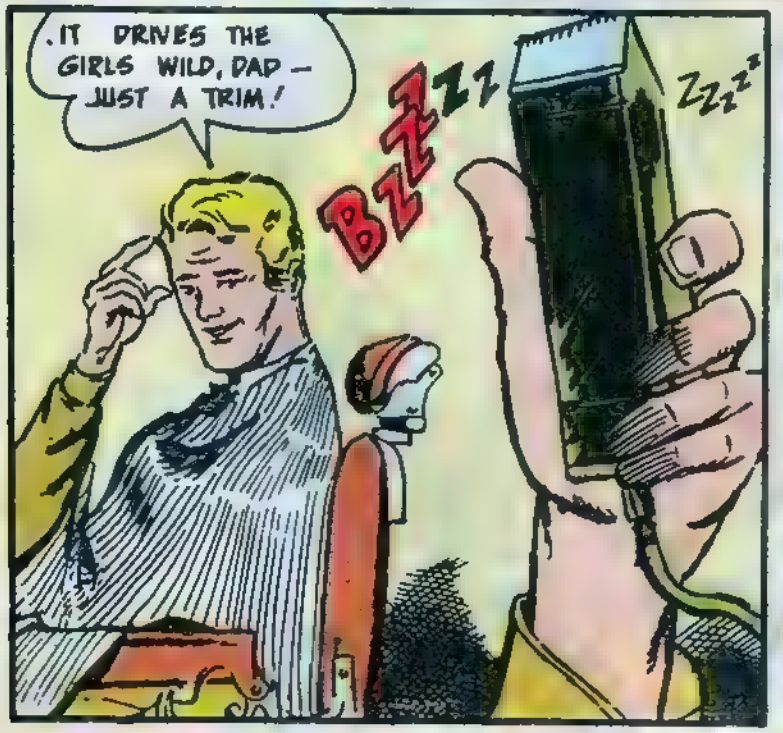

WE WRAPPED THE BODIES OF TOM AND JOHNNIE IN THEIR WATER-PROOF PONCHOS AND STARTED BACK DOWN THE MUDDY SLOPE.
THE END

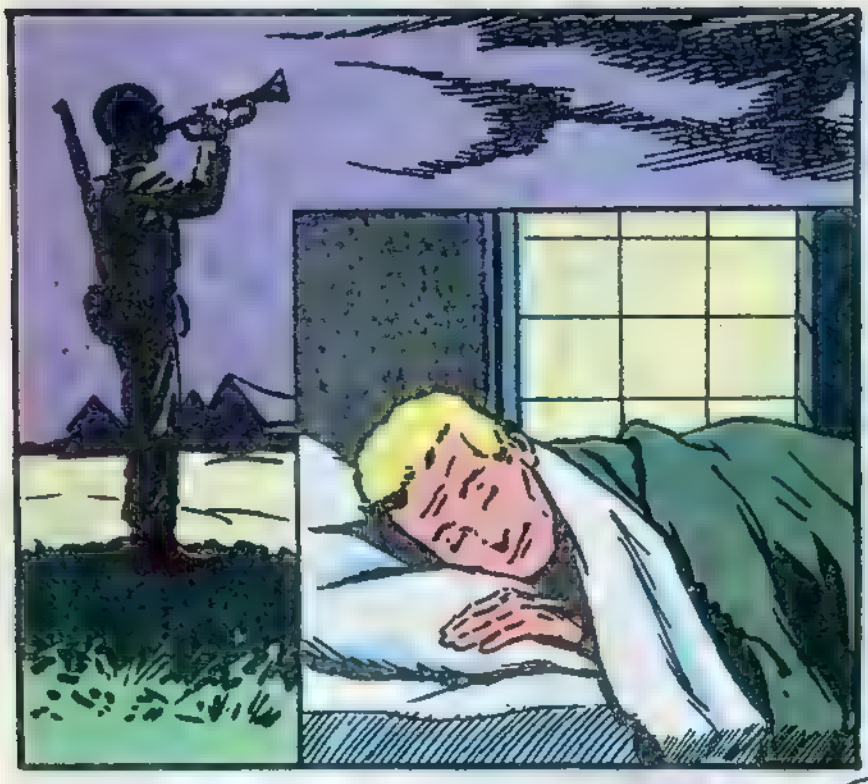
THE STEEL Halo
BACK AT BASIC, THE D.I. HAD CALLED IT A STEEL HALO. NOW IT LAY BESIDE THE STILL CRUMPLED FORM OF SAM, THE KID FROM NEW YORK WHO HAD WORN IT DEEP INTO ENEMY TERRITORY. TO LEARN THE HISTORY OF THIS PAIR, LET'S GO BACK .....
S. ERIES

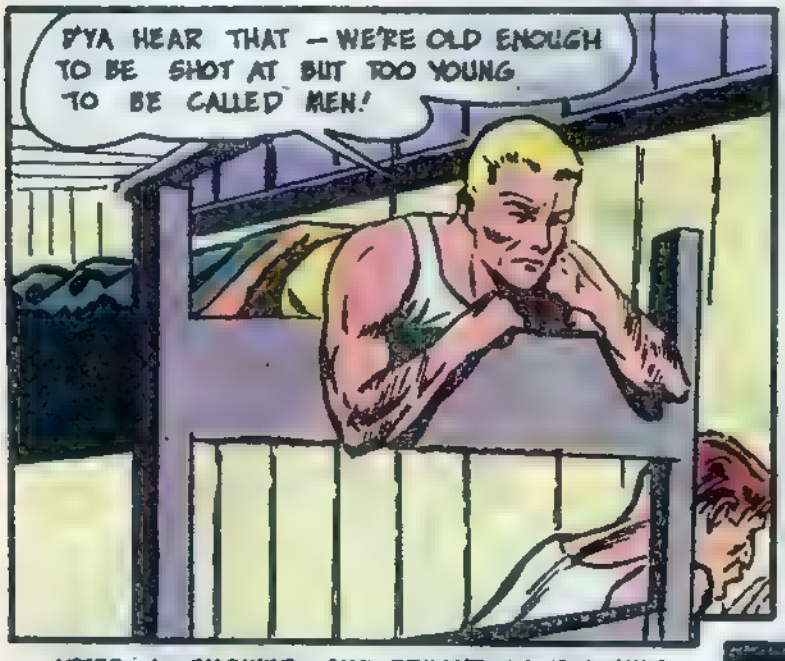
WHICH WAY TO THE ROYAL SUITE, MAN?



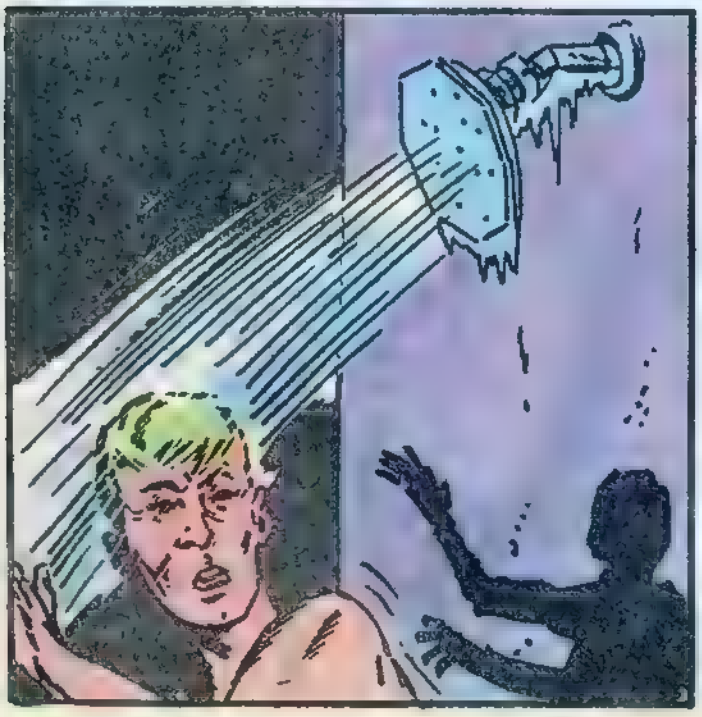

39 CHEST, 30 WAIST, 8D SHOE.....


.IT DRIVES THE GIRLS WILD, DAD — JUST A TRIM!
BZZZZ
ZZZZZ

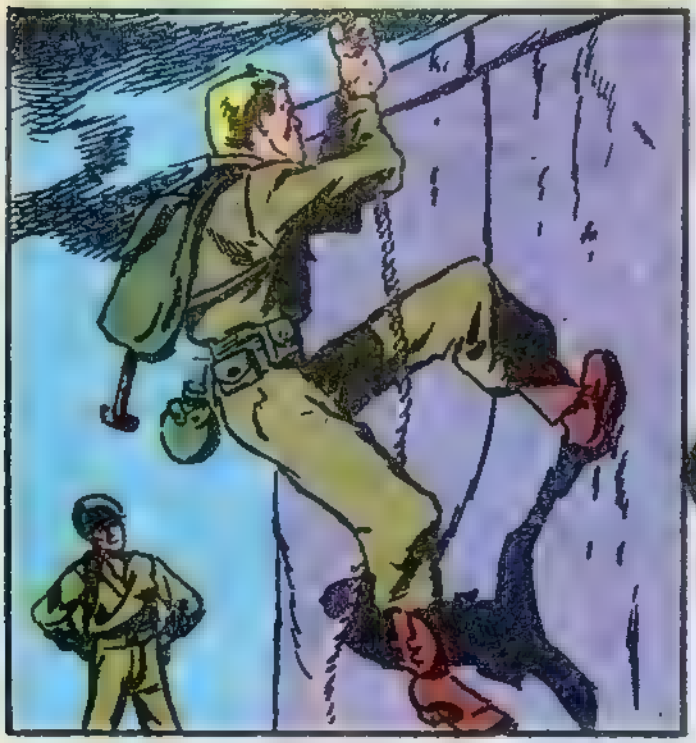




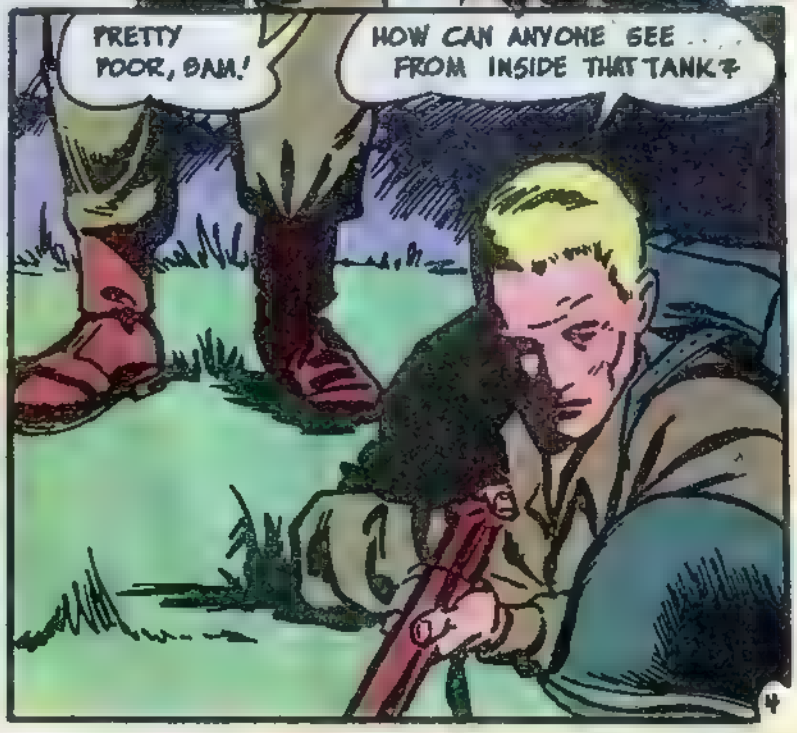
AFTER A SHOWER AND BREAKFAST, TRAINING WAS BEGUN IN EARNEST!



YOUR EARS WILL LEARN TO HOLD IT UP, SAM!



DON'T LOSE IT AGAIN, SOLDIER!


PRETTY POOR, SAM!
HOW CAN ANYONE SEE ... FROM INSIDE THAT TANK?

NUTS!

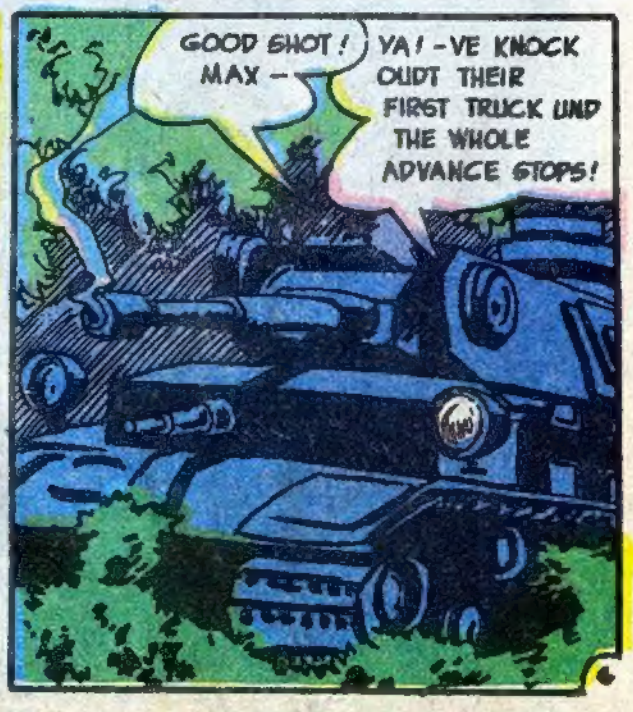
THAT'S VALUABLE EQUIPMENT! FETCH IT BACK, PRONTO!

THERE'LL BE A SHORT RECESS WHILE I EXPLAIN THE IMPORTANCE OF ONE G.I. HELMET!

YOUR SKULLS WON'T TURN ASIDE SHRAPNEL AND BULLETS! THIS STEEL HALO WILL!

THE BOYS HAD BECOME MEN! THIS WAS ADMITTED BY THE "TOUGH" D.I. AS HE WISHED THEM WELL ON THEIR JOURNEY TO THE EUROPEAN THEATRE!

THE INFANTRY QUICKLY ESTABLISHED A SOLID BEACH-HEAD AGAINST SURPRISINGLY LIGHT ENEMY RESISTANCE AND SOON MOVED FURTHER INTO ENEMY TERRITORY...



LET'S HOPE THEY WAIT THERE AWHILE!
LONG ENOUGH FOR OUR OTHER TANKS TO MOVE IN ON THEIR FLANK! THEN THEY STAY HERE, FOREVER!
THAT SHELL WAS AN 88! WE'RE UP AGAINST A TANK COLUMN!
I THINK SO, TOO! BUT WHERE ARE THEY?
ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT, SIR! YOU'LL HEAR FROM ME, I HOPE!
CAN'T BE MUCH FURTHUR, IF THEY'RE HERE AT ALL!
A GERMAN SENTRY OVERHEARD SAM'S CALL FOR AIR SUPPORT AND...
OUTPOST TO H.Q. - SEND FLY BOYS! - A COLUMN OF TANKS OBSERVED AT.....
7

HE'S HERE, SIR! AND I THINK HE'S BREATHING!
CORPSMAN!

DOC, SAM WAS MY BUDDY! IS HE ...?
HE WILL BE O.K.

HE HAD A NASTY GASH THERE, BUT FORTUNATELY HIS HELMET PROTECTED HIM FROM SERIOUS DAMAGE!

HOW DID WE MAKE OUT SIR? DID YOU GET MY MESSAGE?
THE DOCS TELL ME, YOU CAN GET UP AND AROUND NOW! GET DRESSED AND I'LL SHOW YOU!

WELL, THANKS TO YOU, THE AIR FORCE REALLY CLOBBERED 'EM!
AND THANKS TO MY STEEL HALO, I'M HERE TO SEE IT!
END